

Russian River Biological Opinion Flow Changes



Pam Jeane
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Biological Opinion Requirements

- The Water Agency must pursue **permanent** changes to D1610 minimum flow requirements.
- Beginning in 2010, the Water Agency must pursue **interim** relief from D1610 minimum flows.



Progress to Date

- Filed Water Rights Petition in 2009
- Filed Temporary Change Petition in 2010
 - Received & Implemented Order Summer 2010

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
ORDER WR 2010-0018-DWR

IN THE MATTER OF PERMITS 12947A, 12949, 12950, AND 18598
(APPLICATIONS 12919A, 15736, 15737, 19361)

SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

SOURCES: Dry Creek and Russian River
COUNTIES: Sonoma and Mendocino Counties

ORDER APPROVING TEMPORARY URGENCY CHANGE
BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WATER RIGHTS:

1.0 SUBSTANCE OF PETITION

On April 6, 2010, the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) filed a petition with the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) requesting approval of a Temporary Urgency Change to the subject permit pursuant to California Water Code section 1435. The petition requests the following temporary modifications to the Russian River in-stream flow requirements as mandated by the Russian River Biological Opinion (Biological Opinion) for the improvement of juvenile salmonid habitat:

- (1) From May 1 through October 15, 2010, in-stream flow requirements for the upper Russian River (from its confluence with the East Fork of the Russian River to its confluence with Dry Creek) be reduced from 165 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 125 cfs; and
- (2) From May 1 through October 15, 2010 in-stream flow requirements for the lower Russian River (downstream of its confluence with Dry Creek) be reduced from 125 cfs to 73 cfs, with the understanding that SCWA will typically maintain approximately 85 cfs at the Hacienda gauge as practicable feasible.

No changes to the in-stream flow requirements for Dry Creek are requested. The petition is made to comply with mandates in the Biological Opinion that was issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on September 24, 2008.

2.0 BACKGROUND

SCWA's petition involves the following permits:

- Permit 12947A is for year-round direct diversion of 92 cubic feet per second (cfs) from the Russian River and storage of 122,500 acre-feet per annum (afy) in Lake Mendocino.

Progress to Date (continued)

- Notice of Preparation of EIR for Fish Habitat Flows and Water Rights Project
 - Released NOP September 2010
 - Three scoping open houses
 - About 40 people submitted comments



Next Steps

- Organize/Consider Comments
- Provide Summary of Comments to Board
- Prepare Draft EIR
 - Complete Necessary Studies
 - Perform Impact Analysis
- Release Draft EIR Summer 2012 (Year 4)

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